

# Ercenur Ünal

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## Employment

Assistant Professor 2018–present  
Department of Psychology, Özyeğin University

Postdoctoral Researcher 2016–2018  
Radboud University & Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics  
Advisor: Ash Özyürek

## Education

Ph.D., Cognitive Psychology, *University of Delaware* 2016  
Advisor: Anna Papafragou

M.A., Developmental Psychology, *Koç University* 2011  
Advisor: Aylin C. Küntay

B.A., Psychology, *Koç University* 2009

## Research Interests

Language and cognition, Multimodal communication, Event cognition, Spatial Language, Evidentiality

## Grants

The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) 1001 Project, “Event Representation in Cognition, Language and Development”, Role: PI, 2021–2024 (783,000TL).

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Insight Development Grant, “Cross-linguistic investigation of events in speech and gesture”, Role: Co-applicant, PI: Myrto Grigologlou, 2021–2024 (\$65,339).

## Honors and Awards

Graduate Fellowship, University of Delaware Office of Graduate and Professional Education – 2015–2016

Dissertation Award, University of Delaware Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences – 2015

Professional Development Award, University of Delaware – 2013

Paula Menyuk Travel Award, Boston University Conference on Language Development (merit-based) – 2012

Excellence in Graduate Studies Award, Koç University Graduate School of Social Science and Humanities – 2011

## Publications

### Journal Articles

(Last position as senior author, ^ graduate student mentee, # undergraduate student mentee)

1. Karadöller, D.Z.,^ Sümer, B., **Ünal, E.**, & Özyürek, A. (2022). Sign advantage: Both children and adults' spatial expressions in sign are more informative than those in speech and gestures combined. *Journal of Child Language*, 1-27.
2. **Ünal.**, Manhardt, F., & Özyürek, A. (2022). Speaking and gesturing guide event perception during message conceptualization: Evidence from eye movements. *Cognition*, 225, Article 105127.
3. ter Bekke, M.,^ Özyürek, A., & **Ünal, E.** (2022). Speaking but not gesturing predicts event memory: A cross-linguistic comparison. *Language and Cognition*, 14(3), 362-384.
4. Karadöller, D.Z.,^ Sümer, B., **Ünal, E.**, & Özyürek, A. (2022). Late sign language exposure does not modulate the relation between spatial language and spatial memory in deaf children and adults. *Memory & Cognition*.
5. **Ünal, E.**, Richards, C., Trueswell, J., & Papafragou, A. (2021). Representing Agents, Patients, Goals and Instruments in causative events: A cross-linguistic investigation of early language and cognition. *Developmental Science*, 24(6), Article e13116.
6. **Ünal, E.**, Ji, Y. & Papafragou, A. (2021). From event representation to linguistic meaning. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 13, 224-242.
7. **Ünal, E.**, & Papafragou, A. (2020). Relations between language and cognition: Evidentiality and the sources of knowledge. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 12, 112-135.
8. **Ünal, E.**, & Papafragou, A. (2019). How children identify events from visual experience. *Language, Learning and Development*, 15, 138-156.
9. **Ünal, E.**, & Papafragou, A. (2016). Interactions between language and mental representations. *Language Learning*, 66, 554-580.
10. **Ünal, E.**, & Papafragou, A. (2016). Production-comprehension asymmetries and the acquisition of evidential morphology. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 89, 179-199.
11. **Ünal, E.**, Pinto, A., Bungler, A. & Papafragou, A. (2016). Monitoring sources of event memories: A cross-linguistic investigation. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 87, 157-176.

### Book Chapters

1. **Ünal, E.**, & Papafragou, A. (2018). The relation between language and mental state reasoning. In J. Proust & M. Frontier (Eds.), *Metacognitive diversity: An interdisciplinary approach*, (pp.153-169). Oxford University Press.
2. **Ünal, E.**, & Papafragou, A. (2018). Evidentials, information sources and cognition. In A. Aikhenvald (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of evidentiality*, (pp.175-184). Oxford University Press.

### Conference Proceedings

1. Avcılar, G.,^ & **Ünal, E.** (2022). Linguistic encoding of inferential evidence for events. In J. Culbertson, A. Perfors, H. Rabagliati, & V. Ramenzoni (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*, (pp.2825-2830). Cognitive Science Society.

2. Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2021). Spatial language use predicts spatial memory of children: Evidence from sign, speech, and speech-plus-gesture. In T. Fitch, C. Lamm, H. Leder, & K. Tessmar (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*, (pp.672-678). Cognitive Science Society.
3. ter Bekke, M., Özyürek, A., & Ünal, E. (2019). Speaking but not gesturing predicts motion event memory within and across languages. In A.K. Goel, C.M. Seifert, & C. Freksa (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 41st Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*, (pp.2940-2946). Cognitive Science Society.
4. Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2013). Linguistic and conceptual representations of inference as a knowledge source. In S. Baiz, N. Goldman, & R. Hawkes (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 37th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development*, (pp.433-443). Cascadilla Press.

#### *Journal Articles in Turkish*

1. Tarakçı, B., & Ünal, E. (2022). Renk algısı alanında dil ve biliş etkileşimlerinin doğası. *Nesne*, 10(23), 130-149.
2. Avcılar, G., Bilir, B., Cihankaya, Ş., Coşkun, Z., Piri, İ., & Ünal, E.. (2021). Jestlerin çocukların dil-iletişim ve bilişsel becerilerinin gelişimindeki destekleyici rolü. *Psikoloji Çalışmaları*, 41, 789-812.
3. Ünal, E., & Baturlar, Ö. (2020). Zihinsel durumların dilde ve bilişte temsili. *Dilbilim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 31, 123-140.

#### *Papers under review/revision*

Ünal, E., Wilson, F., Trueswell, J., & Papafragou, A. Asymmetries in encoding event roles: Evidence from language and perception.

#### *Papers in preparation*

Ünal, E., Kırbaçoğlu, K., Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., & Özyürek, A. Children's multimodal spatial expressions are sensitive to the complexity of the relations.

Ünal, E., Mamus, E., & Özyürek, A. Multimodal encoding of motion events in speech and gesture.

## **Teaching**

### *Özyeğin University*

Research Methods and Ethics – graduate level  
Cognitive Development – graduate level  
Introduction to Research Methods  
Research Methods and Inferential Statistics  
Cognitive Development  
Psychology of Language  
Language and Thought

## *University of Delaware*

Research Methods (Instructor)

Research Methods (Teaching Assistant, Instructor: Kristen Begosh)

Cognition (Teaching Assistant, Instructor: Jared Medina)

Measurement and Statistics (Teaching Assistant, Instructor: Agnes Ly)

Psychology of Language (Teaching Assistant, Instructor: Anna Papafragou)

## **Mentorship**

### *Ph.D. Students*

#### *Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics*

Dilay Z. Karadöller (2022) – Development of spatial language and memory: Effects of language modality and late sign language exposure (co-supervised with Aslı Özyürek and Beyza Sümer)

### *Master's Students*

#### *Özyeğin University*

Ceren Barış (2022–ongoing)

Bilge Tınaz (2022–ongoing)

Bahar Tarakçı (2023) – The length of time and the duration of space: Word learning of spatial and temporal metaphors across auditory and visual modalities

Kevser Kırbasoğlu (2022) – Development of multimodal expressions of space in speech and gesture: The case of sagittal and topological spatial relations

Gökçen Avcılar (2022) – Encoding inferential evidence for events in language: Evidence from Turkish speaking children and adults

Cansu Gökbalkan (2019) – The links between use of mental state terms, Theory of Mind and social skills in middle childhood

#### *Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics*

Marlijn ter Bekke (2018) – Speaking but not gesturing predicts motion event memory across and within languages

### *Ph.D. Qualifying Exam Committees*

Burcu Buğan (2020, Boğaziçi University)

### *Master's Thesis Committees*

Tutku Tunalı (2022, Sabancı University)

Aslı Yurtsever (2021, Koç University)

Zeynep Arslan (2019, Koç University)

## **Professional Service**

### *Professional societies*

Cognitive Science Society Governing Board member (2022– ; 6-year term)

### *Editorial boards and reviewing*

Editorial board: First Language (2022– )

Program committee: Cognitive Science Society Meeting (annually since 2020)

Ad-hoc journal reviewing: Applied Psycholinguistics, Bilingualism: Language and Cognition, Cognition, Cognitive Linguistics, Cognitive Science, Frontiers in Psychology, International Journal of Bilingualism, Journal of Cultural Cognitive Science, Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, Language, Language Acquisition, Language and Cognition, Language Cognition and Neuroscience, Language Learning and Development, Linguistics and Philosophy, Memory and Cognition, NeuroImage, Pragmatics & Cognition, Spatial Cognition and Computation

Book chapter reviewing: John Benjamins, Koç University Press (in Turkish), Trends in Language Acquisition Research (TILAR) Series

Grant reviewing: Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences

Conference reviewing: International Congress of the International Association for the Study of Child Language (2020), Cognitive Science Society Meeting (2014, 2019), Society for Research in Child Development (2017, 2019), Workshop on Events in Language and Cognition (2016), Workshop on Children's Acquisition and Processing of Head-Final Languages (2014, 2016)

### *Memberships*

Cognitive Science Society

International Association for the Study of Child Language

## **University service**

### *Özyeğin University*

Curriculum committee (2023– )

Faculty search committee (2022– )

Undergraduate internship coordinator, Developmental area (2019– )

Organizer, Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı Research Festival (2019)

Coordinator, Graduate program in Developmental Psychology (2018–2021)

### *Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics*

Research staff committee co-chair (2016–2017)

## **Meeting organization**

### *Symposia and workshop (as organizer or discussant)*

9th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science – 2023

Universality and diversity in event cognition and language, symposium at the 44th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Toronto, Canada (co-organized with Yue Ji and Anna Papafragou) – 2022

Role of gestures in facilitating language acquisition and cognitive development, symposium at the 15th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA (co-organized with Dilay Karadöller) – 2021

Common ground is dead. Long live common ground!, 3rd Cycle Linguists Webcast. Speakers: Daphna Heller and Sarah Brown-Schmidt (Discussant with Victor Ferreira) – 2020

Universality and diversity in event cognition, symposium at the International Convention of Psychological Science, Paris, France (co-organized with Monique Flecken) – 2019

Event Representations in Brain, Language, and Development (two-day workshop at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, co-organized with Monique Flecken and Aslı Özyürek) – 2017

Encoding Events in Language and Cognition, symposium at the 14th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Lyon, France – 2017

### *Seminar*

Events in Language and Cognition reading group, bi-weekly meetings for graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty (co-organized with Monique Flecken) – 2017

Multimodal Language and Cognition meetings, coordinator for weekly talks from sign language and gesture researchers – 2017

## **Invited Talks**

(Selected)

Multimodal encoding of motion events in speech and gesture guides event apprehension. The Big Event, King's College London, London, UK, April 2022

Events in multimodal language and cognition. Language Day, Koç University, Istanbul Turkey, July 2021

Evidentiality in language and cognition. Department of Linguistics, University of Toronto, Canada, February 2021

Studying language production from a multimodal perspective. Language and Cognitive Development Lab, Department of Foreign Language Education, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, August 2020

Sources of knowledge in language and thought. Department of Psychology, Sabancı University, Istanbul, Turkey, November 2019

Acquisition of evidentiality. Joint conference of the sections Developmental and Educational Psychology (paEpsy), Leipzig, Germany, September 2019

Evidentiality in language and cognition. Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, July 2019

Evidentiality in language and thought. Cognitive Neuroscience Day. Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul, Turkey, April 2019

Information sources in language and cognition, Department of Psychology, Özyeğin University, Istanbul, Turkey, June 2017

Thinking and talking about evidence: Developmental and cross-linguistic perspectives, Lunch Talk Series, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, The Netherlands, January 2018

Representing evidence in language and cognition: Developmental and cross-linguistic perspectives, Department of Psychology, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey, December 2015

Homologies between language and event cognition. Language and Communication Development Lab, Department of Psychology, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey, December 2014

Perception and inference as knowledge sources: Developmental and cross-linguistic studies. Language and Cognition Seminar, Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, November 2013

Developmental and cross-linguistic approaches to the study of inference as a source of knowledge. Annual Food for Thought Event, Department of Psychology, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey, December 2012

### **Invited Teaching Talks**

Events in Language, Cognition and Development, Cognitive development seminar, Middle East Technical University, April 2022

Evidentiality in language and cognition, Language and communication seminar, University of Toronto, February 2021

The role of nature vs. nurture in children's language development, Social sciences summer school, The Science Academy of Turkey, June 2020

Acquisition of evidentiality, Syntax-semantics interface graduate seminar, Radboud University, May 2017

Evidentiality in language and cognition, Language and thought graduate seminar, Radboud University, November 2016

Dependent subjects t-tests, Introduction to statistics for psychology, Boğaziçi University, December 2015

Language, Cognition, University of Delaware, October 2014

Evidentiality in language and cognition, Psycholinguistics graduate seminar, University of Delaware, October 2014

Interactions between language and color, Language and thought graduate seminar, Koç University, December 2013

### **Conference Presentations**

(^ graduate student mentee, # undergraduate student mentee)

Karadöller, D.Z.,^ Kırbaşoğlu, K.,^ Sümer, B., Özyürek, A., & Ünal, E. (2023). Children use gestures to increase the informativeness of their spatial expressions depending on the complexity of spatial relations. 1st International Multimodal Communication Symposium, Barcelona, Spain.

Lee, S., Pintado-Urbanc, A., Papafragou, A., & Ünal, E. (2023). Linguistic and cognitive event units across languages. Oral presentation at the 36th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, Pittsburgh, PA.

Lee, S., Pintado-Urbanc, A., Papafragou, A., & Ünal, E. (2023). Cross-linguistic differences in linguistic and cognitive event unit formation. Oral presentation at the 98th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Denver, CO.

Avçılar, G., & Ünal, E. (2022). Olaylardan elde edilen çıkarımsal kanıtların dilde ifade edilmesi. Poster presented at the 3rd Developmental Psychology Symposium, Istanbul, Turkey.

Kırbaçoğlu, K., Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., Özyürek, A., & Ünal, E. (2022). Konuşma ve jestlerde uzamsal ifadelerinin gelişimi. Poster presented at the 3rd Developmental Psychology Symposium, Istanbul, Turkey.

Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2022). Geç işaret dili ediniminin uzamsal dil ve bellek ilişkisine etkileri. Oral presentation at the 3rd Developmental Psychology Symposium, Istanbul, Turkey.

Avçılar, G., & Ünal, E. (2022). Linguistic encoding of inferential evidence for events. Poster presented at the 44th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Toronto, Canada.

Ünal, E., Manhardt, F., & Özyürek, A. (2022). Multimodal encoding of events in speech and gesture guides visual event apprehension. Oral presentation at the 44th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Toronto, Canada.

Özyürek, A., Ünal, E., Manhardt, F., & Brouwer, S. (2022). Modality specific differences in speech, gesture and sign modulate visual attention differently during message preparation. Oral presentation at the 9th Conference of the International Society for Gesture Studies, Chicago, IL.

Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2022). Relationship between spatial language experience and spatial memory: Evidence from deaf children with late sign language exposure. Oral presentation at the 4th International Conference on Sign Language Acquisition (Virtual).

Ünal, E., Kırbaçoğlu, K., Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., & Özyürek, A. (2022). Children's multi-modal spatial expressions vary across the complexity of relations. Poster presented at the 8th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science, Istanbul, Turkey. (Virtual)

Coşkun, Z., & Ünal, E. (2021). Türkçe'nin özellikleri hareket içeren olaylar anlatılırken eylemi gerçekleştiren kişiye yöneltilen dikkati nasıl şekillendirir? Poster presented at the Experimental-Cognitive Psychology Symposium, Ankara, Turkey. (Virtual)

Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2021). Spatial language use predicts spatial memory of children: Evidence from sign, speech, and speech-plus-gesture. Oral presentation at the 43rd Annual Meeting of Cognitive Science Society, Vienna, Austria.

Karadöller, D.Z., Ünal, E., Sümer, B., & Özyürek, A. (2021). Producing informative descriptions of Left-Right relations: Differences between children and adults in using speech and gesture. Oral presentation at the 15th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA.

Gökbalkan, C., & Ünal, E. (2021). The links between mental state language and Theory of Mind in middle childhood. Oral presentation at the 15th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA.

Karadöller, D.Z., Sümer, B., Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2020). Sign advantage for children: Signing children's spatial expressions are more informative than speaking children's speech and gestures



combined. Oral presentation at the 45th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.

**Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2019).** Visual attention is guided by language-specific encoding of events not only in speech but also in gesture. Oral presentation at the Workshop on Crosslinguistic Perspectives on Processing and Learning, Zurich, Switzerland.

Karadöller, D.Z., **Ünal, E.**, Sümer, B., Özer, D., Göksun, T., & Özyürek, A. (2019). Children but not adults use both speech and gesture to produce informative expressions of Left-Right relations. Oral presentation at the 44th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.

Gökbalkan, C., **Ünal, E. (2019).** Orta çocukluk döneminde zihinsel durum terimlerinin kullanımı, zihin kuramı ve sosyal beceriler arasındaki ilişkiler. Poster presented at the 2nd Developmental Psychology Symposium, Izmir, Turkey.

ter Bekke, M., **Özyürek, A., & Ünal, E. (2019).** Speaking but not gesturing predicts motion event memory within and across languages. Poster presented at the 41st Annual Meeting of Cognitive Science Society, Montreal, Canada.

**Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2019).** The relation between visual event apprehension and multimodal event descriptions. Oral presentation at the International Convention of Psychological Science, Paris, France.

ter Bekke, M., **Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2019).** Speaking but not gesturing predicts motion event memory within and across languages. Poster presentation at the International Convention of Psychological Science, Paris, France.

ter Bekke, M., **Ünal, E., & Özyürek, A. (2018).** Does production of speech and co-speech gesture predict motion event memory? Poster presented at the Synapsium meeting, Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

ter Bekke, M., **Ünal, E., Karadöller, D.Z., & Özyürek, A. (2017).** Cross-linguistic effects of speech and gesture production on memory of motion events. Poster presented at the Workshop on Event Representations in Brain, Language and Development, Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

**Ünal, E., Trueswell, J., & Papafragou, A. (2017).** How children map event participants onto language. Oral presentation at the 14th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Lyon, France.

**Ünal, E., Trueswell, J., & Papafragou, A. (2016).** Event role identification in language and cognition. Poster presented at the Workshop on Events in Language and Cognition, Gainesville, FL.

**Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2015).** The relation between evidentiality and source monitoring. Poster presented at the 9th Biennial Meeting of Cognitive Development Society, Columbus, OH.

**Ünal, E., Wilson, F., Trueswell, J., & Papafragou, A. (2015).** Relationship between linguistic and conceptual event roles: A cross-linguistic investigation. Poster presented at the 9th Biennial Meeting of Cognitive Development Society, Columbus, OH.

**Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2015).** Conceptual factors in the acquisition of evidentiality. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of Society for Research on Child Development, Philadelphia, PA.

- Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2014). Production-comprehension asymmetries in language acquisition: The case of evidential morphology. Oral presentation at the 39th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.
- Wilson, F., Ünal, E., Trueswell, J., & Papafragou, A. (2014). Homologies between language and event cognition: Evidence from event role prominence. Oral presentation at the 39th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.
- Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2014). Acquisition of evidential morphology in Turkish: A production-comprehension asymmetry. Oral presentation at the International Workshop on Children's Acquisition and Processing of Head-final Languages, Cambridge, MA.
- Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2014). Acquisition of evidentiality. Poster presented at the 13th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2013). Perception and inference as sources of knowledge in oneself and others. Poster presented at the 8th Biennial Meeting of Cognitive Development Society, Memphis, TN.
- Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2013). Children's evaluation of inference as a source of knowledge in themselves and others. Poster presented at the 25th Annual Convention of Association for Psychological Science, Washington, D.C.
- Ünal, E., Pinto, A., Bunker, A., & Papafragou, A. (2013). Monitoring sources of event memories: Does native language play a role? Poster presented at 25th Annual Convention of Association for Psychological Science, Washington, D.C.
- Ünal, E., & Papafragou, A. (2012). Linguistic and conceptual representations of inference as a knowledge source. Oral presentation at the 37th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.
- Ünal, E., & Küntay, A.C. (2011). The effect of ecological factors and linguistic skills on event memory. Poster presented at the 12th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Montreal, Canada.
- Semizer, Y., Candan, A., Ünal, E., Naigles, L. R., & Küntay, A. C. (2011) Do Turkish learners employ the accusative case in finding the agent? Poster presented at the 12th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Montreal, Canada.
- Ünal, E., Küntay, A.C., & Sandıkçı, Y.# (2011). Effects of visual and verbal factors on memory binding. Poster presented at the 12th European Congress of Psychology, Istanbul, Turkey.
- Ünal, E., & Küntay, A.C. (2011). Effects of linguistic cues on memory binding in preschool children. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of Society for Research on Child Development, Montreal, Canada.